

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
BELLEVUE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES

August 8, 2013  
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall  
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Simas, Commissioners Bishop, Lampe, Larrivee,  
Tanaka, Zahn

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Jokinen

STAFF PRESENT: Paul Krawczyk, Kevin McDonald, Hillary Stibbard,  
Department of Transportation

OTHERS PRESENT: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair Simas who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Tanaka, who arrived at 6:36 p.m.; Commissioner Larrivee, who arrived at 6:38 p.m.; and Commissioner Jokinen, who was excused.

3. STAFF REPORTS

Senior Project Manager Paul Krawczyk reported that the City Council discussed the Transportation Facilities Plan (TFP) on July 22.

Commissioner Lampe said the TFP has been adopted by the Council. Some projects received a full discussion, beginning with the Bellevue Way HOV lane. The final vote was 5-2 in favor and the discussion revolved around the project cost of \$18 million and which other projects could benefit from the having the funds allocated to them instead. The west segment of the Newport Way project between 116th Avenue SE and 120th Avenue SE was discussed and the staff has been directed to continue studying it.

Mr. Krawczyk said Sound Transit is scheduled to hold an open house on September 10 at the Highland Center at which they will give an update on their 60 percent plans for East Link. The city will join in the open house and will information available regarding city plans.

Mr. Krawczyk announced that starting with the next Commission meeting Senior

Transportation Planner Kevin McDonald would be filling the post of staff liaison to the Commission.

4. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY COUNCILS, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Councilmember Wallace noted that the TFP was approved by the Council and voiced his appreciation for the hard work done by the Commission. He commented that the Council is anxious to get an Environmental Impact Statement done for the Newport Way project as soon as possible.

5. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS – None

6. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

7. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Lampe. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bishop and it carried unanimously.

8. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

- A. Downtown Transportation Plan Update: On-Street and Paid Parking
- B. Downtown Transportation Plan Update: Miscellaneous Curbside Uses
- C. Downtown Transportation Plan Update: Review Preliminary Recommendations

Senior Transportation Planner Kevin McDonald said there are currently approximately 300 on-street parking spaces in the downtown. Most allow two-hour parking and they primarily located in proximity to retail and residential uses. Transportation layover spaces technically are on-street parking sites as well, but they are designated for transit vehicles only.

Mr. McDonald reminded the Commissioners that they previously had developed a list of criteria for the consultant to use in evaluating block faces for potential opportunities to add parking. The criteria are organized into three categories: planning, which relates to city codes and the downtown subarea code; transportation operations, which relates to roadway segment PM peak volume/capacity, intersection level of service, and PM peak bus volume; and existing conditions/engineering standards.

With regard to bus frequency, Commissioner Bishop noted from the information that all block faces in 2010, with the exception of two segments on 108th Avenue NE, had a rating of 5, indicating a low number of buses. The projection for 2030 is not much different. He suggested the uniform data indicates there is a factor that is not being used. Mr. McDonald said the consultant may have reached the conclusion that the number of buses operating in the

downtown will not make a difference with respect to the ability to park alongside the curb. Commissioner Bishop said his concern was that bus traffic is based on volume rather than the V/C ratio used for all other vehicles. The approach seems to diminish the importance of the level of service and the V/C approaches.

Chair Simas suggested the Commission should wait to hear the consultant's opinion.

Mr. McDonald commented that the issue will not make a difference to the 2010 figures, but for 2030 where the data shows some gradation in ranking based on bus volumes the future on-street parking options may be impacted.

Commissioner Zahn pointed out that the map seems to indicate there are areas where there are moderate parking opportunities in the transit priority network, particularly along NE 10th Street. Mr. McDonald that segment is mapped as having moderate potential, and where the moderate potential is also associated with off-peak parking when fewer buses will be running. The places shown on the map as high opportunity locations for permanent time-limited on-street parking will need to be weighed against factors such as peak hour level of service issues, but they may be appropriate for off-peak parking.

Commissioner Bishop commented that off-peak on-street parking is common in other cities but new to the city of Bellevue. The idea of simply going along with what a consultant from a major city says is something to think about is something the Commission should discuss. There are some 40,000 parking stalls in the downtown, only 300 of which are on the street. And what is on the table is an increase of only 75 on-street slots. Mr. McDonald said there are actually close to 42,500 parking stalls in the downtown and the number is increasing with every new development. He agreed, however, that on-street parking will not add a significant quantity of parking, but what could be provided is locationally strategic in that it will provide support for nearby retail businesses that currently have little or no on-site parking, and visitors to residential buildings.

Commissioner Larrivee asked how many of the more than 40,000 parking stalls in the downtown are actually open to the public. Mr. McDonald said he did not know the number. Parking management is demand-based and as such varies over time given that building managers will make adjustments depending on the demand within the building for tenant parking. He said he suspected that in a strong market there is less parking available to the general public than there is in a weak market.

Chair Simas asked if the Commission is expected to look toward maximizing on-street parking and as part of that analyzing whether or not off-peak parking is actually an efficient use of city right-of-way, or if the Commission is free to evaluate whether or not it should even look at the issue of on-street parking. Mr. McDonald said the existing downtown subarea plan has policy direction to look at on-street parking opportunities, especially in the Ashwood area, the northwest quadrant, and Old Bellevue. The Council principles adopted for the study asks the

Commission to look generally at on-street parking opportunities, so it is within the scope of work. The analysis done to date shows there is some potential for new permanent on-street parking.

Mr. McDonald said application of the criteria led to development of a matrix which translated to the color-coded map showing high and moderate opportunities for on-street parking. The consultant used his professional judgment in blending the 2010 and 2030 findings into a single map. The result is a guide not a prescription and in consideration the addition of any on-street parking would require the application of engineering standards and professional judgment.

Commissioner Bishop said his concern was that the consultant's map would get embedded in a document that will be forwarded to the Council that says the Commission recommends the highlighted areas as appropriate for on-street parking. He said he actually questioned several of the mapped locations.

Commissioner Zahn suggested the Commission would need to talk about the criteria and how each should be weighted. The consultant clearly used equal weighting for each, but depending on how they ultimately are weighted the map could look very different in the end. Mr. McDonald allowed that the Commission is free to weigh the criteria as it sees fit and direct the staff to apply it to the matrix.

Mr. McDonald commented that some of the miscellaneous curbside uses such as taxi stands, pick-up and drop-off locations, can be accommodate in off-peak curbside parking locations. Many of the uses are intended to support restaurant, entertainment and hotel uses which see their peak activity during non-peak traffic hours.

Mr. McDonald asked if the high-opportunity parking locations should be recommended as part of the Downtown Transportation Plan. He said such a recommendation would provide policy support but would not necessarily be prescriptive relative to specific locations.

Commissioner Lampe suggested that before that question can be answered, the Commission would need to come to an agreement on the methodology, the mechanics of the matrix and the any weighting that should be done.

Commissioner Zahn observed that the objective for on-street parking as included in the staff memo is to support and provide access to nearby commercial establishments and residences. She asked if that is in fact the goal and if that goal had been formally established. Mr. McDonald said the response to the question lies partly with best practices and partly with community interest. The work to update the Downtown Transportation Plan has been ongoing for a couple of years during which there have been several community forums, the most recent of which was dovetailed with the Downtown Livability Initiative. All outreach efforts have included discussions on parking and the community has been clear in saying it likes the concept of having on-street parking to support retail and residential uses. On-street parking is

a best practice that has been shown to support retail and residential uses in downtown mixed use settings.

Mr. McDonald said the broader question is whether or not the Commission supports the notion of looking for opportunities for more on-street parking in the downtown. If the answer is yes, it will be worthwhile to go through the process of weighting the criteria and modifying the matrix accordingly.

Chair Simas said he struggled with the amount of work being undertaken to yield a very few number of parking stalls. He said he questioned whether or not he could say yes to the question of whether or not gaining those stalls will in fact make the city more vibrant. The way the downtown is developing; adding on-street parking may not make sense at all. He went on to say he could support reducing the overall number of parking stalls in the downtown and reviewing the codes to make sure that what is being developed can support its own parking needs.

Commissioner Tanaka voiced a similar concern. He said the consultant simply was tasked with taking an objective set of criteria and applying it across the downtown core grid. However, it is highly questionable that the provision of more on-street parking could ever be deemed to be a high priority. The classic example is the on-street parking on NE 4th Street on the south side of Bellevue Square. Taking away both lanes on the north and south side of NE 4th Street would result in a nightmare scenario during the holidays with traffic backed up all the way to I-405.

Commissioner Zahn suggested the focus should be on the areas identified as having a need for on-street parking, namely Ashwood, Old Bellevue and the northwest part of the downtown. Determining what it will take to achieve the goal for those areas would be money better spent over trying to find a place for stalls here and there throughout the downtown. Mr. McDonald said that approach reflects the policy included in the current downtown subarea plan.

Commissioner Bishop agreed that there are streets in some neighborhood areas that might be appropriate for additional on-street parking. Other areas, such as the pedestrian corridor and the four auto dominant streets, should simply be taken off the table. Transit streets should also be removed from further consideration.

Commissioner Larrivee disagreed. He said on-street parking actually makes a lot of sense on NE 10th Street. On-street parking generally adds to the economic vitality of the city and in fact can have a calming effect. Cars parked between the lanes of travel and the sidewalk improves the safety of pedestrians using the sidewalk. On-street parking has been shown to work very well in many auto-oriented urban areas. He agreed, however, that some street segments, including NE 4th Street, are simply not appropriate locations for on-street parking.

Chair Simas said his opposition stemmed in part from the creation of off-peak parking and the

confusion surrounding being able to park at a site sometimes but not at other times. There also is a cost associated with enforcing the part-time parking spaces. Where there are opportunities to create anytime on-street parking, it would be appropriate to capitalize on those opportunities.

Mr. McDonald said going in the direction of removing the auto-bias streets from consideration would not result in the loss of very many potential on-street parking spaces. The decision to remove those streets from the matrix is up to the Commission.

A motion to remove the auto-bias streets of NE 4th Street, NE 8th Street, Bellevue Way and 112th Avenue NE from being considered for on-street parking was made by Commissioner Bishop. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Zahn and it carried unanimously.

Commissioner Bishop suggested the same should be done for the NE 6th street pedestrian corridor. Mr. McDonald said only a one-block segment of the roadway between 110th Avenue NE and 112th Avenue NE would even be eligible. Commissioner Bishop said he would take the pedestrian between Bellevue Way and 112th Avenue NE off the table. Mr. McDonald said no parking is proposed for either the moderate- or high-opportunity areas on NE 6th Street.

Commissioner Zahn asked if the motion and suggestion of Commissioner Bishop would simply result in overly broad exclusions or just removing from consideration the most problematic areas. Chair Simas said the answer to that question boils down to the fact that each Commissioner is going to have a different opinion. The Priority 1 corridors have up to 89 buses and the Priority 2 corridors have 91 buses or more as proposed, though a different split point could be devised.

Mr. McDonald said another consideration is the location and spacing of bus stops and the frequency buses pull into and out of those spaces. Typically bus stops in the downtown are not designed to be pull outs where the bus actually leaves the travel lane; rather the stops occur in the travel lanes thus supporting the speed and reliability of the bus service. When curbside parking is added along bus routes, buses must pull into what would otherwise be a parking lane and then pull back out, thereby compromising speed and reliability. That is the rational basis for taking a close look at the Priority 1 transit corridors.

A motion to remove the Priority 1 and Priority 2 transit corridors from being considered for on-street parking was made by Commissioner Bishop. The motion died for lack of a second.

A motion to remove the Priority 1 transit corridors from being considered for on-street parking was made by Commissioner Bishop. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lampe.

Commissioner Tanaka said he was not sure he had enough information on which to make an informed decision. He said he would need more information before voting to take the Priority 1 transit corridors off the table.

Commissioner Lampe said the important factors for him were the number of bus stops and where they are located. He said that data would help inform him about any potential conflicts. He allowed that removing on-street parking from the Priority 1 transit corridors would be a step toward erring on the side of caution.

Commissioner Larrivee pointed out that there are existing on-street parking stalls on some of the Priority 1 transit corridors and asked if the motion on the table would recommend their elimination. Mr. McDonald highlighted the location of the existing on-street parking along the priority transit corridors. Commissioner Bishop said he did not have removing the existing stalls in mind when he made the motion.

Commissioner Larrivee commented that the use of off-street parking for the complimentary system of taxis and the like is going to be a growing industry in the coming years, particularly in the downtown area. Every action should be taken to accommodate the uses to avoid having them move off toward the residential areas. Bellevue is growing up and becoming a real downtown and as such needs the kinds of amenities other real downtowns offer, including places where taxis can park. He said he would not vote in favor of removing the Priority 1 transit corridor from consideration when it comes to determining where off-street parking should be allowed.

Chair Simas suggested that parking for taxis, limos and the like is actually different from creating parking stalls that would be open for anyone to use. He agreed that consideration should be given to specifically accommodating service vehicles, including taxis. Mr. McDonald noted that spontaneous pick-ups and drop-offs occur all around the downtown every day. In most large cities there are designated taxi stands, which are permanent locations where taxis are allowed to queue up waiting for customers. Bellevue does not currently have any dedicated on-street taxi stands, but there are some areas that operate in a similar fashion.

Commissioner Zahn said she would support the motion so far as it applies to on-street parking along 108th Avenue NE. That roadway needs to be kept unrestricted and there are other places where on-street parking could be created.

Mr. McDonald clarified that the motion on the table did not address the issue of spontaneous pick-up and drop-off curbside activity. He noted that in the next agenda item longer-term loading, unloading and taxi stand uses would be discussed.

The motion to remove the Priority 1 transit corridors from being considered for on-street parking carried 5-1, with Commissioner Tanaka voting no.

Mr. McDonald asked the Commissioners to take a position on the notion of allowing off-peak on-street parking. Commissioner Lampe said he was under the impression that the original motion had covered both peak and off-peak parking. Chair Simas said the motion addressed only the primary roadways. He said he had no argument against allowing off-peak on-street

parking on the other streets in the downtown.

Commissioner Zahn observed that if on-street parking is allowed but found later to be problematic, the city can always act to disallow the use. Nothing is set in stone.

Commissioner Bishop said the consultant's report is strong in pointing out that a considerable amount of analysis and evaluation is needed before allowing off-peak on-street parking. He pointed out that one of the criteria is the V/C ratio which has to do with the street volumes and the street capacity. Where lanes are removed from streets, the capacity is dramatically decreased, and even where there are lower volumes in the off-peak hours the V/C ratio will be dramatically impacted.

Chair Simas clarified that while the Commission will be making a recommendation, the City Council will need to approve every on-street parking location on a block-face by block-face basis. Mr. McDonald concurred, noting that it will take a city ordinance to provide for on-street parking.

Commissioner Zahn said she did not feel as though she had enough information and suggested the right approach might be to suggest a pilot for a specific location to see how on-street parking affects the street. Chair Simas responded by saying while that approach has some merit, the fact is there are so few places in the downtown where on-street parking could be created that it would make more sense to simply recommend yes or no on on-street parking in the downtown.

A motion to recommend to the City Council consideration of expanding the on-street parking supply by looking at the potential for off-peak on-street parking in moderate-opportunity locations, subject to site-specific evaluation, was made by Commissioner Larrivee. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lampe.

It was clarified that all of the moderate-opportunity sites would be operational only during off-peak hours.

Commissioner Bishop indicated he would vote against the motion. The number of spaces that could be created is so few the benefit would be outweighed by the bureaucratic nightmare that would be required to manage them.

Commissioner Zahn asked if the city has the budget that would be needed to make the modifications. Implementation of either the high- or moderate-opportunity areas would require funding for the analysis, the signing and striping, and for enforcement. Mr. McDonald noted that the Council has provided some resources for what has been called downtown early implementation work which could be used to fund a study to determine exactly which locations would be appropriate. Implementation would take additional funding.



Commissioner Lampe asked if any of the on-street parking stalls already in play in the downtown are restricted to off-peak hours. Mr. McDonald said none of them are.

The motion to recommend to the City Council consideration of expanding the on-street parking supply by looking at the potential for off-peak on-street parking in moderate-opportunity locations, subject to site-specific evaluation, carried 5-1 with Commissioner Bishop voting no.

Turning to the issue of paid parking, Mr. McDonald noted that the topic was the subject of a proposal during the first Budget One process. Had it been approved, the proposal would have actually funded the implementation of paid on-street parking. While that proposal was not funded, the Council has once again directed staff and the Commission to study the issue and to develop a recommendation. The previous recommendation included pay stations, assumed a rate of \$1.50 per hour with a two-hour maximum, a rate that relates reasonably well with what other urban areas in the Northwest are charging. The estimated cost related to the budget proposal included 55 kiosks at \$10,000 each, the personnel to conduct the public outreach and enforcement on an annual basis, for a total startup cost of about \$750,000. It was projected that the annual revenue stream would be almost a million based on 80 percent occupancy for 300-plus days per year. The projected annual expenses for maintenance and enforcement were \$500,000. It would take some three years to pay off the initial startup costs, after which the city would profit between \$400,000 and \$500,000 per year.

Mr. McDonald allowed that the data is three or four years old, but asked the Commission to indicate whether or not a pay-for-parking program should be recommended in the next budget cycle. The recommendation would take the form of a policy that calls for conducting an analysis and formulating a budget proposal. Additionally, the recommendation would need to indicate how the profits should be allocated. The community has suggested the funds should be used for streetscape improvements, midblock crossings, landscaping, wayfinding and other things that would enhance the downtown experience.

Commissioner Tanaka asked if there have been any historical policy reasons not to initiate a pay-for-parking scheme in the downtown. Traffic engineering manager Hillary Stibbard said restrictive parking in the downtown began in the late 1990s when the Council directed the department to keep office and construction workers from taking up the available on-street parking. There were complaints from merchants that led to the restrictions. She said some merchants likely would support having pay-for-parking implemented in the downtown, though others likely would not on the fear that if customers have to pay they will be less likely to run in and run out of their establishments. That sentiment was voiced by Tacoma merchants when that city was considering a pay-for-parking program in 2010, but in the end they changed their minds and have since supported the program.

Commissioner Lampe commented that a use like a dry cleaners might benefit from not having paid parking out front and asked if consideration has been given to allowing any five- or ten-minute short-term parking for free. Ms. Stibbard said that would be unlikely given the limited

number of stalls and how precious the commodity is. She said staff has sought to have loading zone spots installed in various locations, like one on a block face. During that process merchants have noted that they have customers who only need to run in and run out, which can be accommodated with 15-minute load zones, which would not be included in paid parking.

Commissioner Zahn commented that recently the city of Seattle extended its pay-for-parking timeline and generated a big outcry from several merchants who said they were losing business to those not wanting to pay. Ms. Stibbard said staff was specifically directed not to bring forward a proposal for the last budget cycle, so there have been no talks with anyone from Seattle. Kirkland has pay-for-parking in its downtown at a couple of lots and along a few streets. Mr. McDonald said one of the best practices considerations for pay-for-parking is to have turnover and some available parking along block faces. Where there is 80 percent occupancy, drivers can know with some degree of certainty that they will be able to find a place to park. The turnover provides the opportunity for more people to patronize a business, and it limits cruising looking for a parking spot.

Commissioner Bishop suggested the issue has the potential to be very controversial.

Commissioner Larrivee said the fact is parking is a commodity with value and people should pay for it. In terms of scarcity of parking in the downtown, the point has been reached where paying for parking is something the city should seriously consider.

A motion to recommend to the Council moving forward with showing policy support for implementing a pay-for-parking program was made by Commissioner Larrivee. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lampe.

Commissioner Lampe said he would support the motion but suggested in moving ahead the city should solicit the opinion of the merchants before finalizing anything.

Commissioner Bishop asked if the level of enforcement needed for paid parking is any different from the level of enforcement needed relative to time-limited parking. Ms. Stibbard said enforcement is done by contract in the downtown core and a single enforcement officer works the area. On occasion that officer is summoned to appear in court and represent the city. The assumption is that two officers would be needed. Currently the city spends \$80,000 per year enforcing the two-hour limit and does not recover the cost.

The motion carried 5-1 with Commissioner Bishop voting no.

Chair Simas asked if a city board or commission traditionally recommends how to spend the profits that will result from implementing a proposed policy. Mr. McDonald said the Council will want to enact a set of program management principles for the pay-for-parking program, and one of the principles could very well be to reinvest the profits in the neighborhood, which is a common approach.

Chair Simas suggested that to simply say the funds should be reinvested in the neighborhood is too broad and could be taken to mean anything from landscaping to fixing potholes. He said it should be defined clearly and in a way that makes sense.

Commissioner Larrivee suggested the funds should be used only for transportation-related improvements.

A motion to recommend directing the annual pay-for-parking revenues toward program management and streetscape improvements in the downtown area was made by Commissioner Bishop. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Larrivee.

Commissioner Zahn questioned the degree to which the Commission should attempt to drive a brand new program that has not even been subjected to any community outreach to date.

Chair Simas said the proposal from the Commission will be nothing more than a recommendation. By suggesting the money should be spent in some particular way may do nothing more than get the conversation rolling when the public is asked to weigh in.

Commissioner Lampe said he would prefer to see the word "transportation" in the recommendation, but he agreed with Chair Simas that the recommendation of the Commission will only set a starting point.

The motion carried unanimously.

#### B. Downtown Transportation Plan Update: Miscellaneous Curbside Uses

Mr. McDonald said miscellaneous curbside uses include loading zones, either designated or impromptu; passenger pick-up and drop-off sites, either designated or impromptu; designated taxi stands; and uses such as bike corrals and landscaping. Community input garnered through the Downtown Transportation Plan and the Downtown Livability Initiative processes has included comments on various curbside uses and support has been voiced addressing the uses, particularly short-term passenger drop-off and pick-up at both businesses and residents.

There is very little policy support for dealing with the miscellaneous curbside uses. There is one policy in the Transportation Element that says new development must be responsible for its freight loading and unloading activities without using the public rights-of-way. There is nothing specific in the downtown subarea plan. The right-of-way use code talks about the types of permits needed for certain uses that occur in the public right-of-way and the conditions that apply. The Land Use Code addresses on-site loading and generally provides that businesses make provision for their needs except when they either do not have loading needs or when they can demonstrate that a right-of-way use permit allowing the use to occur in the public right-of-way is in the public interest.

Many curbside uses are occurring in the downtown whether designated or not. The casual carpool, which is a new phenomenon in urban centers, is starting to occur in Bellevue; people wait in certain places to wait for a carpool to come by and pick them up. There are designated curbside taxi stands in the downtown, but there also is a lot of spontaneous drop-off and pick-up happening. The parking day phenomenon involves the short-term one-day use of an existing curbside parking space for some other use, such as a mini-park. Other uses may include a bike parking corral or a bike share docking station.

Commissioner Bishop asked if a developer during the development review stage could propose giving an easement to move the sidewalk over in order to create a pullout for passenger or truck loading. Mr. McDonald said suggestions of that sort are in fact encouraged and certainly would be accommodated, even on auto-bias streets.

Mr. McDonald said no additional policy or code support is needed to allow for the various curbside uses, but the Commission may want to develop a recommendation encouraging on-site loading through the development review process. While already required, emphasizing its importance would be a good move. The use of curb space and the center turn lane for loading and unloading often occurs because the design of the off-street space is so bad it takes an inordinately long time for vehicles to get in and out; many choose to simply risk getting a ticket. During development review, the design of on-site loading and circulation should be done in a way that will allow loading vehicles to get in and out quickly and easily.

Commissioner Bishop pointed out that on-site loading and curbside loading are not necessarily the same thing. There are places where curbside loading would be very appropriate, though it should be done using a curb pullout that is identified in the development review process. The recommendation from the Commission should not discourage either approach.

Mr. McDonald said curbside pullouts for passenger pick-up and drop-off could also be identified during the design review process. The Commission could recommend the practice to the Downtown Livability Initiative steering committee which is handling the private sector issues.

Commissioner Larrivee said he has noticed no coordination between curb cuts and load/unload zones for lift-equipped vehicles, so what ends up happening typically is that the activity must occur in the traffic lane. There needs to be a tighter coordination between the load/unload zone and actual access to the sidewalk.

Commissioner Tanaka pointed out that there are several senior living facilities in the downtown. Retirees typically do not drive themselves and choose instead to use taxis or vans, or have someone pick them up, all of which highlights the need for easy and safe access to vehicles. Mr. McDonald said the city strongly encourages off-street pick-up and drop-off facilities for uses where activity of that sort is likely to occur.

Mr. McDonald some locations are prime for off-peak zones for taxi stands to support entertainment and restaurant businesses. Bellevue Way has a lot of pick-up and drop-off activity going on already, particularly in the evening hours. Designated taxi stands may be appropriate at some locations.

Commissioner Bishop said he would make a distinction between peak- and non peak-hour use of taxi stands.

Mr. McDonald said other curbside uses, including the parking day and bike parking, are allowable through a right-of-way use permit. No additional policy support is needed but might be helpful if the Commission is intrigued by the notion of allowing the miscellaneous uses. He agreed it would be good to amend the preliminary recommendation to align with the Commission's conversation by encouraging policy support to provide for curbside loading and unloading and passenger pick-up and drop-off zones through the development review process. With regard to taxi stands, he suggested it would be useful to have policy support that includes location criteria for where the stands might be appropriately located, particularly evening/nighttime taxi stands in off-peak parking locations. Policy support would also be useful relative to parking day and curbside bicycle parking with the support of adjacent businesses.

Commissioner Larrivee expressed concern over allowing non-transportation uses like parking days in transportation rights-of-way, particularly having people using a portion of a street where vehicles normally travel. Safety should always be the prime concern. Mr. McDonald said adjacent vehicle speed and volume could be a factor in considering whether or not to allow a parking day use.

#### C. Downtown Transportation Plan Update: Review Preliminary Recommendations

Mr. McDonald reminded the Commissioners that the Commission was heavily involved in providing input to the Council regarding the planning principles for the Downtown Transportation Plan update.

Commissioner Bishop called attention to the tenth planning principle and suggested that as written the implication is that there is a system by which a bike project can be compared to a road project to a pedestrian project. Mr. McDonald said the details will not be worked out until the final recommendations are made. The Council must give direction on the recommendations, and comment will be sought from the public on those recommendations, before the issues are packaged and subjected to a comprehensive review.

Mr. McDonald said the measures of effectiveness are modal measures with sustainability outcomes. Each of the modal measures has quantitative and qualitative metrics associated with it.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Zahn, Mr. McDonald explained that the mobility options are individual but account for more than the sum of the parts. He noted that the number of vehicles on the arterials in the downtown between 1991 and 2010 did not change substantially even in light of the fact that the downtown has grown dramatically over that period of time. All of the different elements working together have theoretically, improved downtown mobility; that theory will play out through the measures of effectiveness analysis. Land use in the downtown has also grown dramatically and the land use forecast has been used to generate the number of expected person trips on downtown streets in 2030.

Mr. McDonald said there are a lot of roadway projects embedded in the current Downtown Transportation Plan and new roadway projects are anticipated by 2030. He shared with the Commissioners a list of the baseline set of roadway projects embedded in the model, noting that while some are in the downtown, most are not but support downtown mobility by providing east-west capacity. Many of the projects that were in the pipeline in 2010 have either been constructed or are under way currently. Additionally, a list of projects that have been advanced in terms of funding and design to be considered possible by 2030 has been developed for the build scenario. Several of them are freeway network projects related to SR-520 and I-405.

When traffic modeling is applied to the roadway network using a program called Dynameq, some of the build projects make a big difference to downtown mobility. The baseline data, however, makes it clear that much of the congestion is occurring on the east side of the downtown owing to lack of capacity on the regional system which backs up and causes some of the level of service issues. Improving the regional system will improve the ability to get into and out of the downtown. According to the Dynameq model, in 2010 the average intersection level of service in downtown as a whole measures out to be LOS C. The 2030 baseline is LOS E, and the 2030 build is LOS D. The concurrency standard for the downtown is LOS E.

Commissioner Bishop said LOS E is an outrageously congested condition that no one would ever want to have to live with. The core of downtown Kirkland is close to LOS E for three hours every afternoon. Should downtown Bellevue ever start to approach the standard, the city is going to be entirely different from what it is now, which is LOS C. Mr. McDonald informed the Commission that when the topic on the table is the Comprehensive Plan update, concurrency and level of service will be discussed, including how it is measured. The city will certainly want to advocate for the baseline and build projects that will provide capacity for the downtown that may or may not be in the CIP or the TFP, and for freeway system projects that also will provide capacity. There are ideas that are not in the baseline or the build, including the NE 6th Street subsurface arterial. A concept similar to the NE 6th Street subsurface arterial has been suggested for Bellevue Way and 106th Avenue NE. The idea would be to take the through traffic and put it below grade, leaving a street for local access and pedestrian improvements on the surface. Those ideas need to be documented. Continuing to advance the

SCATS system should also be recommended.

With regard to transit, Mr. McDonald noted that as of 2010 transit service was provided in close proximity to 86 percent of the residents and employees in the downtown. The projection is that by 2030 with some additional transit service and some rerouting to better serve the core area 97 percent of residents and employees will be covered.

Commissioner Bishop referred to the transit coverage map and pointed out that the Sound Transit route from the transit center along NE 6th Street to northbound I-405 is not shown, nor is there any indication of a connection between I-405 and the transit center. Mr. McDonald explained that the map shows downtown coverage only where there are transit stops. A separate map is being developed that will show all of the regional connections that are so important to mobility in the downtown. Commissioner Bishop said he would at least like to have the map show that the route is there even if there are no stops. Commissioner Lampe concurred given that the data shows the importance of the north-south I-405 routes. Commissioner Larrivee disagreed. He pointed out that the map is intended to show rider access to transit, not the flow of transit that serves the downtown area.

With respect to the priority transit network, Mr. McDonald said the map shown to the Commission in March showing the Priority 1 and Priority 2 corridors based on traffic volume has been superseded by the new map that more closely represents the preliminary recommendations from the Transit Master Plan.

Commissioner Bishop observed that the orange lines on the map fade off into the distance. He suggested that by 2030 NE 6th Street will extend across the freeway and the line for that road should be shown as fading off toward the east.

Mr. McDonald reviewed the preliminary recommendation as outlined in the staff memo, with a focus on specific strategies relative to improving speed and reliability. He noted the recommendations do not prescribe solutions but offer a toolkit of operational things that could be done to improve the speed and reliability of transit.

Commissioner Bishop suggested the proposed 50 percent increase in buses under the transit capacity bullet accurately reflects the plan. It should include the anticipated 500 percent increase in ridership over 2010 along with the 50 percent increase in buses. The ridership number should be included as justification for the increase in transit service.

With respect to layover spaces, Mr. McDonald noted that the transit priority corridor network does not anticipate many dead-end routes that start or stop in downtown Bellevue. With through routes far less layover spaces are needed in or near Downtown.

Mr. McDonald said the recommendations relative to the transit center suggest a more distributed network and the need for operating the transit center in a more efficient manner

from the standpoint of the buses and the passengers. A toolkit for enhancing the usefulness of individual transit stops is also included in the recommendations.

Commissioner Bishop voiced concern that the transit center will simply not be even close to being able to handle what the plan calls for. He asked if the recommendations could mention the need to review what will need to be done in order to accommodate the forecasted increase in riders and buses. Mr. McDonald said the consultant agreed that the future capacity of the transit center is an issue. The way the consultant proposed dealing with the issue is through the redistribution of some of the routes that currently serve the transit center; the distributed network will relieve the pressures on the transit center and is reflected in the recommended transit priority network.

Mr. McDonald reviewed with the Commissioners the recommendations for bicycle facilities in the downtown. He noted that the recommendation included a shared bicycle and transit facility through the downtown on 108th Avenue NE rather than a dedicated bike lane.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Bishop regarding the proposed dedicated bike lane on 112th Avenue NE, Mr. McDonald said 112th Avenue NE has two different facility types, a bike lane and a shared lane. The bike lane runs northbound on the east side of 112th Avenue NE through the NE 8th Street intersection, and preliminary design work has been done which shows that can be accomplished by slightly narrowing each of the travel lanes. The path that comes up 114th Avenue NE crosses under NE 6th Street and connects with 112th Avenue NE just to the south of NE 8th Street. A spur of the off-street path parallels NE 6th Street and connects with the transit center, and the proposal is to tie into that existing path and give riders the choice of using a dedicated bike lane on 112th Avenue NE to continue northbound. Commissioner Bishop pointed out that in a previous discussion there was talk of working through the NE 8th Street interchange via grade separating the ramps on both the south and north ends. Mr. McDonald said that approach could be introduced as a concept. He added that going under NE 8th Street would be more problematic because of the underlying utilities.

Mr. McDonald said the preliminary bike route recommendations have proven useful to Sound Transit in informing them about bicycle access to the South Bellevue, East Main and Downtown stations.

The recommendations will include a toolkit to help illustrate what the various types of bicycle facilities look like.

Commissioner Bishop questioned including in the recommendations the word "require" relative to on-site bicycle facilities. Chair Simas explained that the issue of amenities in the downtown will be the focus of attention for the Downtown Livability Initiative CAC. Whether something ultimately will be incentivized or required is yet to be decided. He suggested leaving in the word "require."



Mr. McDonald reviewed with the Commissioners the discussion relative to retrofitting the pedestrian corridor to make it more wheel-user friendly.

Commissioner Lampe noted that the area around the Galleria is difficult to navigate. Mr. McDonald agreed and said the reason is the level of activity there. The proposal is only an idea that will be forwarded to the Downtown Livability Initiative steering committee for further consideration.

Mr. McDonald said the recommendations for crosswalks, midblock crossings and through-block connections have not changed since they were previously discussed. The notion of having standard, enhanced and exceptional crosswalks types is responsive to location, urban design and the demand for crossing by pedestrians. The exceptional crosswalks would be located only along the pedestrian corridor and on Main Street in Old Bellevue, and the enhanced crosswalks would be located primarily in the core where there is a lot of pedestrian activity now and more is expected in the future.

Commissioner Bishop commented that the map shows a midblock crossing every block along NE 4th Street and NE 8th Street between the freeway and the downtown core. He suggested it would make sense for the Commission to take a position on grade separating those critical midblock crossings, as well as the ones shown on Bellevue Way north of NE 8th street. Mr. McDonald said the Council has provided by ordinance for a few grade-separated crossings. The Commission can forward a recommendation for other areas if it chooses to do so, but the decision to expand the scope of the current ordinance would be up to the Council. Commissioner Bishop observed that the map shows midblock crossings on both NE 4th Street and NE 8th Street, neither of which is even a possibility, is misleading.

Chair Simas said he had no problem designating NE 4th Street and NE 8th Street as appropriate locations for midblock crossings, and he agreed there should be an indication that they would be grade separated. Mr. McDonald said he would make an indication on the map to reflect the desire of the Commission.

Mr. McDonald noted that sidewalks fall under the Land Use Code and as such are the purview of the Downtown Livability Initiative. The Commission's recommendation regarding sidewalk widths will be forwarded to the steering committee. He reviewed with the Commissioners the map showing the recommendations for wider sidewalks in some areas of the downtown core and landscape treatments involving the replacement of street trees and grates with planter strips containing trees along arterials. The planter strips can be installed without removing the existing trees by simply removing the grates and constructing the new planters around the trees.

With regard to through-block connections, Mr. McDonald said they also are in the purview of the Downtown Livability Initiative steering committee. The Commission previously discussed the need for improved wayfinding so people know where through-block connections will take

them. Also discussed was the use of common paving materials and the need for the connections to be universally accessible.

Mr. McDonald said the Commission's recommendation will be before the Council on September 23. With the blessing of the Council, the package will be taken to the community for comment. Ultimately policies will be drafted and project descriptions will be written and it will all go forward with the Downtown Livability Initiative in a comprehensive package for Council consideration in 2014.

9. OLD BUSINESS - None

10. NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Bishop asked if the Commission has a role in the issue of residential parking zones adjacent to the downtown. Mr. Krawczyk said the program is well established in the city and has been issuing permits for many years. He said he was not aware of any proposed changes to the program. There was agreement that a briefing on the program would be useful.

11. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Bruce Nurse with Kemper Development Company, 575 Bellevue Square, thanked the Commission for previously discussing the NE 6th Street subsurface arterial issue and the notion of sunken intersections. While such projects are still preliminary, it will be good to keep them in mind. He said he also appreciated the fact that the Commission has given careful consideration to midblock crossings. With regard to on-street parking, he noted that the word "opportunity" was used frequently throughout the presentation. The fact is, however, that the numbers are small and the complications and costs are great. It should be concluded that the negatives outweigh the positives. He added that if Kemper Development Company could have figured out how to charge for parking it would have done so a long time ago to defray the expense of the parking garage at Bellevue Square. In the late 1950s two things threatened Bellevue Square as a young shopping center: few customers and the way the leases were structured. At the same time Kirkland decided to show Bellevue that it was in fact the center of the Eastside; they put in parking meters and that single action persuaded shoppers to frequent Bellevue over Kirkland.

12. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. June 13, 2013

Commissioner Tanaka referred to the motion shown on page 6 and said it was in fact Commissioner Jokinen and not himself who voted against.

Commissioner Lampe called attention to the last paragraph on page 12 and pointed out that in the comments by Mr. Nurse the sentence "...he also suggested that additional bike racks

should be installed at city hall..." should be deleted.

A motion to approve the minutes as revised was made by Commissioner Lampe. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tanaka and the motion carried without dissent; Commissioner Zahn abstained from voting.

13. REVIEW OF COMMISSION CALENDAR AND AGENDA

Mr. Krawczyk reviewed with the Commission the calendar and upcoming agenda items.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Simas adjourned the meeting at 10:20 p.m.

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Secretary to the Transportation Commission

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Date

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Chairperson of the Transportation Commission

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Date